steel. Government would like Bokaro Steel Plant to expand its capacities in a phased manner and stabilise production at each stage of expanded capacity before further expansion is undertaken.

**Prices of Edible oils**

870. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item entitled "Devaluation raises edible oil prices" which appeared in the daily *Statesman*, New Delhi, dated the 10th July, 1991, indicating that the delayed arrival of South-West monsoon in Gujarat would affect the Kharif groundnut output significantly while the recent devalutaion of the rupee and the foreign exchange crunch would result in high prices of edible oils;

(b) whether Government propose to provide adequate foreign exchange to the STC/Marketing Intervention Agency to augment edible oil supply to hold the price line; and

(c) if not, what other help Government propose to provide to the Marketing Intervention Agency to maintain the prices within the upper band of the edible oil prices spectrum ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has not taken any decision yet about the import of edible oil during the current financial year.

(c) Government has not taken any decision to deny imported oil to NDDB as explained in (b) above. Hence the question of providing other help to the market intervention agency to stabilise prices in lieu of imported edible oil does not arise.

**Import of refractories**

871. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the steel manufacturers are allowed to import refractories for their use;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to reduce such imports so as to ensure maximum utilisation of indigenous capacity for the manufacture of refractories ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEB): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Special refractories and items like carbon refractories not manufactured in the country for relining of blast furnaces, secondary refining vessels and continuous casting tundishes are allowed to be imported.

(c) Emphasis of Government is to develop indigenous production of such items by diversification and technological upgradation so as to keep imports at minimum level.

**Efficiency of Agricultural and unorganised labour**

872. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) in what manner Government plan to protect the interest of Agricultural and unorganised labour in the country; and

(b) in what manner Government propose to make such labour as efficient as their counter parts in developed countries of America and Europe?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY): (a) A number of Central Acts like Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970, Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979, payment of Wages Act, 1936 and Minimum Wages Act, 1948 etc. are on the statute